

Message Text

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PAGE 01 REYKJA 00503 130932Z

ACTION EUR-12

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SUBJECT: EDITORIAL ON PRESIDENTIAL DECISION ON RADIATION WARHEAD

REF: REYKJAVIK 0491 (DTG 111411Z APR 78)

1. FIRST EDITORIAL COMMENT ON PRESIDENT'S DECISION
RE ENHANCED RADIATION WARHEAD APPEARED IN PROGRESSIVE
PARTY DAILY TIMINN APRIL 12 UNDERTITLE "SENSIBLE
DECISION BY PRESIENT CARTER". COMMENTARY NOTES THAT
OFTEN DECISION IS SENSIBLE WHEN IT RECEIVES CRITICISM
FROM BOTH SIDES OF AN ISSUE AND THIS IS TRUE OF
DECISION ON ERW. COMMENT CONTINUES ALONG FOLLOWING LINES:
US AND NATO HAWKS HAVE SOUGHT PRODUCTION OF WEAPON WHILE
SOVIETS, WHO ARE NOT AS ADVANCED IN THIS TECHNOLOGY, HAVE
PROTESTED CHARGING THIS WOULD SPEED UP ARMS RACE.
OPINIONS IN WESTERN EUROPE HAVE BEEN DIVIDED. NO
GOVERNMENT OF A COUNTRY THAT WOULD BE THE SITE FOR
SUCH WEAPONS WANTED TO COME OUT PUBLICLY IN SUPPORT
OF THEM THOUGH IT IS NATURAL THAT THEY WOULD HAVE
SOME PART IN DECISION ON MATTER. BEFORE FINAL
DECISION ON PRODUCTION IS MADE, THERE SHOULD BE
ANOTHER ATTEMPT TO REDUCE MILITARY FORCES IN EUROPE.
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IT IS THOUGHT THAT IF WARSAW PACT AGREED TO REDUCE TROOPS
IN CENTRAL EUROPE, NATO WOULD NOT ACQUIRE (SIC) NEW
WEAPON. PRESIDENT CARTER SEEMS TO HAVE AGREED WITH THIS
SINCE HIS ANNOUNCEMENT SAID THAT DELAY WOULD TEST
WILLINGNESS OF SOVIETS TO REDUCE ARMAMENTS IN WESTERN
EUROPE. IT WOULD, OF COURSE, BE BEST IF WEAPTN WERE
NEVER PRODUCED; POSTPONEMENT LEAVES OPEN THIS

POSSIBILITY. THEREFORE PRESIDENTIAL DECISION IS WISE,
AND CRITICISM OF IT UNDESERVED.
BLAKE

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